UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO: Mr. DeLoach

DATE: October 19, 1966

FROM: A. Rosen

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. Shroder
1 - Mr. Raupach
1 - Mr. Sullivan
1 - Mr. Wick

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY
DALLAS, TEXAS, 11/22/63

D.C. TEXAS C.I. NH NY

SYNOPSIS

Wesley J. Liebeler, former Assistant Counsel to the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, by letter received 10/17/66, claims he is deeply concerned about some of the recent books attacking the Warren Commission and its report. Alleges he has discussed situation in some detail with other members of Warren Commission staff, resulting in his undertaking the writing of a book describing generally how Commission conducted investigation, reviewing evidence relating to basic conclusions, and discussing major criticisms of the Commission report and its work.

Liebeler solicits Bureau assistance in several matters which were thoroughly checked into by Warren Commission. He apparently desires data from Bureau contained in reports made available to Commission but not fully utilized by Commission. He alleges he is being sued by Mark Lane, author of "Rush to Judgment", but no process served to date.

Based on prior experience with Liebeler, Bureau could not expect favorable treatment regardless of whether Bureau assisted him or turned down his request. He is obnoxious and made numerous idiotic requests of Bureau while on Warren Commission.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1) If approved, that attached letter be sent to Liebeler acknowledging his letter and advising him that as he is aware, Warren Commission made all of its material available to National Archives and in accordance with Public Law 89-312, all material in Bureau's possession turned over to National Archives and any information he desires will be available through National Archives.

62-109060-4228

REC-52

4 OCT 24 1966

Enclosures

JRM:mpd (9)

CONTINUED - OVER

Section 102

Memo to Mr. DeLoach from A. Rosen
Re: Assassination of President

(2) Inasmuch as Liebeler was a member of the Warren Commission staff, it is believed advisable to alert the Department to the fact that he is in the process of writing a book. Attached is a letter to the Assistant Attorney General. Vinson.

Don't send to Vinson - send it to Acting A.G. K

(3) Upon approval of the letter to Liebeler, a copy of his incoming letter as well as the Bureau's reply will be made available to the Dallas Office for its information inasmuch as Liebeler, during the existence of the Warren Commission, spent considerable time in Dallas and had contact with the Dallas Office on several occasions. Dallas will be instructed not to comply with any requests which Liebeler might make to that office without first clearing such requests with the Bureau and awaiting a specific Bureau reply. (It is not intended to cooperate with Liebeler but it would be well to know the nature of any requests he might make.)

The Los Angeles Office will also be furnished copies of this correspondence inasmuch as Liebeler is now living in the Los Angeles territory and they will be furnished the same instructions as Dallas concerning any requests from Liebeler.

FOR DETAILS - SEE OVER

Letter to Acting Attorney General Vinson
10-10-66
JRM:hw

Memo to DeLoach from Rosen
Re: Assassination of President

DETAILS

Contents of Liebeler's Letter

Bureau is in receipt of a 3-page letter dated October 14, 1966, (received in Bureau 10/17/66) from Wesley J. Liebeler, former Assistant Counsel to the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy. In his letter he states he is deeply concerned about some of the recent books attacking the Warren Commission and its report. He states he has discussed this matter in some detail with other members of the staff of the Warren Commission and in view of the circumstances has undertaken to write a book describing generally how the Commission conducted its investigation, reviewing the evidence relating to the basic conclusions reached in the report, and discussing the major criticisms which have been made of the report and the work of the Commission.

In his letter Liebeler solicits the assistance of the Bureau relative to several matters which were thoroughly looked into by the Warren Commission during its hearings. Liebeler is apparently desirous of the Bureau going beyond the material reported by the Warren Commission and is asking the Bureau to furnish him additional facts which may be in FBI reports.

He also comments that as he proceeds with his work he will have additional questions and mentions that W. W. Norton and Company have agreed to publish the book he is now working on. He comments he understands W. W. Norton and Company are also publishing a book about the FBI which is being written by the Overstreets. Liebeler is referring to Dr. Harry Overstreet and his wife who are known to be preparing a book favorable to the Bureau. Assistant Director W. C. Sullivan has been in contact with the Overstreets during preparation of their book and parts of their manuscript have been reviewed by both the Domestic Intelligence and Crime Records Divisions.

According to Liebeler, Mark Lane, author of "Rush to Judgment", announced to the press he was suing Liebeler for slander. Liebeler states Lane was at the University of California, Los Angeles, on 10/7/66, and Lane refused Liebeler's challenge to debate. Liebeler claims that following Lane's press conference he held one immediately thereafter and charged Lane was going around the country telling lies for money. He states he has not yet been served with any process.

DETAILS - CONTINUED OVER

Prior Experiences with Liebeler:

During the existence of the Warren Commission, Wesley Liebeler was the most obnoxious attorney on the staff and was constantly making completely unreasonable oral requests of the Bureau. This occurred to such an extent that he was told on numerous occasions to clear his requests through Mr. J. Lee Rankin's office to make sure the Commission actually desired the work he was suggesting. Such refusals to honor his requests rarely had any effect and he would be back the next day with another equally "screwball" request. In addition, Liebeler constantly requested assistance in locating material which had been previously supplied to the Commission. Such requests were regularly turned down but this did not deter him from continued requests.

In a memorandum dated June 9, 1964, from Rosen to Belmont, captioned "James R. David, Information Concerning, Security Violation," it reveals that David, by letter dated June 4, 1964, advised he was a retired Naval reserve officer who performed duties as a security officer. David stated that on May 31, 1964, while en route from Keene, New Hampshire, on Northeast Airlines to New York, he observed an individual, who occupied the seat adjacent to him, openly display a report with a cover identifying it as "U. S. Department of Justice, Copy No. 10 of 10, President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy" marked in large block red letters "Top Secret." David furnished a description of this individual and added he had a rather full red beard and the attache case from which he removed the report previously referred to bore the initials "W. J. L." The Commission was furnished a copy of Mr. David's letter on June 9, 1966. (62-109090 Section 14, Serials 170-171).

In a memorandum dated July 8, 1966, concerning the book "Inquest" by Edward Jay Epstein, about the functioning of the Warren Commission, which is severely critical of the Commission, Epstein indicated that one of his sources of material for his book was Assistant Counsel Wesley J. Liebeler who stated that the Commission did "nothing"; the staff members did all the investigating. Liebeler was also quoted as saying that although the FBI was extremely efficient in answering questions submitted in writing, the Agents did not develop any information that was not specifically requested of them. (62-109060-4144)

DETAILS - Continued OVER

Memo to DeLoach from Rosen
Re: Assassination of President

Based on our experience with Liebeler we certainly could not expect favorable treatment in any book he would write and it is believed this would be true regardless of whether we volunteered assistance or turned him down completely on his requests. In view of this it is not felt we should render any assistance whatever to Liebeler.